

Old Aberdeen Community Council

7.30 pm on Tuesday 19th November 2019

in Old Aberdeen Townhouse

Minutes (Revised 17 Dec 2019)

1. Present and apologies

Present: Dewi Morgan (chair), Gordon Mutch (minutes), Isobel Aitken (OACC), Eric Kiltie (OACC), Daniel Boal (Press & Journal), Alan Wight (Aberdeen University), Louise Henrard (AUSA), Erik Roslaev (OACC), Lee Jardine (Police Inspector), Finn Nixon (RGU), Local Resident, Ian Leask, Steven Berry, E. Hepburn.

Apologies: Lekky Shepherd, Teresa Harwood, Trevor Stack, David Craik, Dell Henrickson (Cllr), Michael Hutchison (Cllr).

2. Minutes of previous meeting approved.

3. Police update:

There was generally a low level of crime in the Old Aberdeen area over the past month. There were 14 crimes. These comprised of 6 minor thefts. Of the more major incidents there was one fire raising at the University OTC on the 5th November and an assault on King Street on the 3rd of November. The perpetrator of the assault was also later charged with drugs offences. In the upcoming month there will be a focus on speeding on Don St (towards Hillhead), St Machar Drive & Tillydrone Road. The inspector reminded all that the Xmas & New Year period were always a busy policing time.

4. Aberdeen University Update: AW had no update but stated that the “major” estates review mentioned in the Oct minutes was not major. The minutes were amended accordingly.

5. AUSA reps update:

There are graduations happening Wed to Friday this week so it will be busy around the university. Karen Finch is looking after the AU volunteering database. DM reminded LH that the OACC meetings are open to all and any students that have an interest are welcome to come to our monthly meetings.

6. Seaton Park:

No update from the Park as this was a quiet time for gardening activities. The Friends of Seaton Park have their Festive Fare on the Fourth (they do like their alliterations) – this is happening in Dunbar Hall on the 4th of December 2019. Please enter by the side door as the event is in the small hall at the rear.

7. Planning:

- There were 3 new planning applications.
 - Johnston Halls – installation of two external lights. Ok but AW to clarify light diffusion.
 - MacRobert Building – removal and re-instate a section of boundary wall. Ok
 - 39 Kings Cres – retrospective for enlargement of window to form door + shed. Object.

- There are 10 ongoing – refused/pending/approved applications.

Of note a major Food and Drink unit on Mounthooly Way Ref 191103/DP was refused:

Reasons for Refusal

- Insufficient Information
- Compliance with policy H2 (Mixed Use Areas).
- No assessment of conflict to adjacent uses.
- Pedestrians required to cross secondary bus depot access bell-mouth.

Design Issues

- Too close to the road / visually prominent.
- Footprint and SUDS leaves no room for landscaping.
- Described as “shoe-horned”.

Road / Public Safety

- Conflict between existing traffic and increase in pedestrians.
- No footway along site frontage.
- Proximity to Fire Station / Police Station and no pedestrian crossing.

- The Chanonry will be shut for the next 2 Saturday’s for tree work at the pedestrian entrance to Cruickshank Gardens.

8. Community Vision for Old Aberdeen – progress update is highlighted in the November newsletter. The newsletter has been printed in colour at a local printer.

Progress over the last 4 weeks:

- Meeting with Aberdeen Councillors
- November newsletter

Coming Weeks:

- 20 November; Tourism and Old Aberdeen: Meeting with ACC officers, Visit Aberdeen, Visit Aberdeenshire, UoA representative, St Machar representative, Old Aberdeen Heritage Society representative. Tourism is to be encouraged. This is especially good for local business which struggle to survive in the months when our students are on holiday.
- Bins: please identify problem area’s so these can be highlighted to ACC.
- Identify suitable locations for public benches and bicycle racks.

Into 2020: a team will be assembled to develop a conservation area leaflet. This team will include input from OAHS, ACC, OACC.

9. Other local issues:

- The road surface of the Chanonry near to the Don Street end is pot holed & in poor condition. EK to arrange a meeting of residents with an aim to improve the road surface and to encourage ACC to adopt one of the oldest roads in Aberdeen.
- Remembrance Sunday. DW laid a wreath on behalf of OACC.

10. Councillors Updates: None present.

- DM - It would have been good to get an update on to Bus gate at the S. end of the High Street which was planned to be installed this summer.

11. Treasurers Update:

- ER – OACC has £1496.28 in its bank account. Outgoings this coming month will be the printing of the newsletter & the wreath for Remembrance Sunday

12. Reports of other meetings attended & forthcoming meetings

Past

- Community Council Forum;
- Community Council Forum Planning & Transport sub-group
- 31st October, 1200hrs – Community Vision for OA meeting with our Councillors

Forthcoming

- Meeting on tourism opportunities, representatives from ACC, Visit Aberdeen, Visit Aberdeenshire, UoA, St Machar Cathedral, OAHS – 20 November
- Friends of Seaton Park: 'Festive Fare on the Fourth' – 4 Dec, 7-9pm, Dunbar St Hall (side door)
- Next Civic Forum; last Tuesday of each month, 7pm in Town House
- Next Community Council Forum; first Monday of each month, 7pm in Town House

Opportunities

- Consultation on the Licensing of Sexual Entertainment Venues. Closes 21 November
- Granite City Growing: Aberdeen Growing Food Together. Closes 4 December
- Draft Technical Advice Note: Materials - External building materials and their use in Aberdeen. Closes 9 Dec.
- Social Isolation Mapping Invite (EK)

13. Date and venue for next meeting

- Tuesday 17th December 2019 at 7.30 pm in Old Aberdeen Townhouse

14. AOCB

- LH stated there will be ongoing strike action from University lecturers near month end.

The meeting finished around 8:40pm.

A journalism student from RGU then posed questions to those members of OACC & members of the public who remained on "challenges the tourism industry is facing in Aberdeen". Of note it was stated that there was a lack of council support to bring tourists to Old Aberdeen. There are major attractions in OA – St Machar's Cathedral, Kings College & in general the historic heart of Old Aberdeen. However there is a lack of readily available information on the area, no regular bus service out with term time, no public toilets and not enough benches to allow tourists to dally.